

Moderator (Edith): In celebration of "American Overseas Week" the US Consulate General Chennai is hosting a live webchat to talk about the services offered to American citizens living in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry, as well as general questions related to living in India. Please feel free to submit your questions anytime before or during the webchat. Friday April 23 @ 2pm IST  
Edith Caballero: Welcome! the chat will start in 15 minutes.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): Hello everyone. Thanks for joining us today and Happy Americans Overseas Week! My name is Holly. We're going to start out by quickly going through a presentation about the services we offer to American citizens at the Consulate. It might answer some of the questions you already have or raise some additional ones. Afterwards, we'll get to as many questions as possible in the hour we have.

C Srinivasan: Thanks, I think this is a good initiative; maybe it is also a good starting point to look at how citizen can expand their social linkage in individual cities in a creative yet secure way ...

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): The travel.state.gov website is where you can find most of the information you need about traveling overseas.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): In case you can't read that web address, it is <http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/service.html>

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): The healthcare list is found at the same address.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We'll talk more about our new appointment system later, but the address is <http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/service.html>

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We received several advance questions related to passport renewals. If your question was not answered by the presentation, perhaps this additional information will help.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): You may apply for your (or your child's) passport renewal at any time, even if the old one has not yet expired. Please go to [chennai.usconsulate.gov](http://chennai.usconsulate.gov) to schedule an appointment. The website will also give you details about which documents to bring to the appointment. Your child will have to come to the Consulate for the appointment, along with both parents.

Amitabh: How do I renew my child's passport? I am currently living in Bangalore. Do i need to get my child (4 years) to the Chennai consulate for renewing the passport?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We have been having regular passport outreach in Bangalore. If you are registered with us, you should be receiving notification of those events. You may request an appointment for Bangalore outreach and bring your child there, if you get an appointment. Otherwise, you can schedule an appointment in Chennai. Either way, the child must be present for the appointment.

Matt KB Raj: How long before should we apply for the child's passport?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): The recommendation is that you apply 6 months prior to expiration due to some country's entrance requirements (6 months passport validity), but it's not required. You may renew it at any time. Please ensure, however, that you plan to renew the passport well before any planned travel.

Matt KB Raj: Just a follow up question: The website mentions that the parent identification is the US passport. Should it be only US passport for primary documentation or can we use Indian passport as primary document

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): Yes, an Indian passport is acceptable. If that is unavailable, two other government-issued IDs are acceptable (e.g. PAN card or driver's license).

Sriya: is there any compulsion for american born baby to visit USA once every X years; or else the citizenship would expire? please advise.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): There are no requirements to visit the U.S. to maintain citizenship, either for an American-born child or a naturalized U.S. citizen.

AMARANATHA MUMMAREDDY: can i file my IRS tax in india and can i apply for social security benefits in india?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): You can obtain tax forms at the Consulate in Chennai or on the [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) website. You can mail your tax returns to the U.S. However, there are many online programs that allow you to complete your taxes on line and e-file, which would allow you to complete your taxes more quickly.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): You may also obtain social security forms from the Consulate at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). Once you complete the forms, we can forward them to the Social Security Administration for you, but you will need to follow up with the SSA itself once the forms have been submitted.

Makam: Other than Passport and Visa services what other services do you offer for the US citizens living in Bangalore?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): For those who live in the Bangalore area, we are continuing to try to schedule outreach there as often as possible. We offer passport and CRBA services, as well as notariats. The outreach dates are announced via email for those who are registered with us, as well as on the Chennai and Bangalore websites. Appointments fill up very quickly, and unfortunately not everyone can obtain one. The fastest way to be notified is to register with us and ensure that you keep your email address updated. You can register at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>.

Sridhara Rao: How do I reach someone in case of a emergency situation, say for legal help?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We do not have a legal department. However, we do have a list of attorneys in the consular district, which can be accessed 24/7 at <http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/service.html>. The list is not a recommendation of any of these attorneys; you should contact the attorney of your choice and make your own decision about their ability to meet your needs.

useela 2: How can i renew my driver's license from here?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): For driver's license renewals, each state has different procedures. Many states allow for renewal of licenses by mail or online, but you should check your state's Department of Motor Vehicles website for specific instructions.

C.Srinivasan: U mentioned about warden messages ( i receive them), warden, volunteering, etc., is there any specific URL that discusses more about requirements and expectations on volunteers ???

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): If you are interested in receiving more information about our warden system and possibly volunteering to be a warden, please send us an email at [ChennaiCS@state.gov](mailto:ChennaiCS@state.gov), and we will get you more information.

SG: Do you plan to open a consulate general office in Bangalore (preferably with library for Children to keep in touch with US culture) ?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We currently have a Bangalore Virtual Presence Post (<http://bangalore.usvpp.gov/>). We also offer regular outreach to our Bangalore citizens to provide passport renewals, CRBAs, and notarial services. We also have the American Corner at Bangalore, where there are occasionally cultural events. We also encourage you to become a fan of U.S. Consulate General Chennai on Facebook, where events are often announced. <http://www.facebook.com/chennai.usconsulate>

Guest: how do we use the US consulate library in chennai. Do we need to apply for membership and do we have kids books in there?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): Library distance memberships are offered to those in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry. The fee is Rs. 400 per year and allows you to check out books through the long distance borrower facility. In addition, you can request an inter-library loan of books from the Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata American Libraries. Check out [chennai.usconsulate.gov](http://chennai.usconsulate.gov) for details. If you are in the Chennai area, you can also become a member to check out books. You may access services (but not check out books) without a membership. There will be a Children's Section opening shortly in our library.

Venkataraman Mani: Is it true that medicare does not cover citizens living overseas?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): That is correct.

sohan: My kids (6 years now) passport expired in 23-April-2009. Can I renew now? It was issued in USA on 2004. (Submitted question): If "YES" is there any late fees?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): You can renew now, and there is no late fee.

Madhavan Prasanna: Also for overseas americans studying here , is there any aid provided for carrying out his education here ?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): A good place to start for researching financial aid for study in India is USIEF, the US-India Educational Foundation. USIEF promotes mutual understanding between the two countries by supporting educational exchanges. You can find information on Fellowships for

U.S. Nationals, as well as general information about studying in India, including some grant options. USIEF's website is <http://www.usief.org.in/>.

G.Th.Parks: Is there any word on whether India will stop the new 2-month delay for re-entering tourist-visa holders?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We have no information that the Indian government is planning to change these rules. Again, please register with us, as we might send out a message to registrants if there are again major changes to the visa regulations. You can register at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. You can also contact the nearest Indian Immigration office for visa questions.

Guest: How do we apply for chennai consulate job openings? is there a website where we can browse jobs?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): For those who were interested in employment at the U.S. Consulate in Chennai, please check our job vacancies at [http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/job\\_opportunities.html](http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/job_opportunities.html). You should also be able to find the process for applying on that site as well.

N C " NASH " NACHIAPPAN : CONSUL, TELL US LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE FSOT TEST IN CHENNAI.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): It's generally offered twice a year here in Chennai and at posts throughout India. You can get additional information at <http://careers.state.gov/officer/testinfo.html>.

Sriya: One question little off track: Just because child is US Citizen (by birth) would an application by Parents for any work visa get REJECTED, with the impression of any intentions of parents settling down in USA?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): As with any visa type, the applicant has to meet the qualifications of that visa. In this case, for a work visa, if the parents are qualified for the visa and have a valid petition, the citizenship status of the child is not a factor in the process.

sohan 2: I am father of kid. Renew his expired passport next month but i am unable to attend consulate due to bad health. Is it enough to submit DS-3053 and DS-11

Hari: What is the website for Hyderabad embassy?

Moderator(Amy): Hi Hari, thanks for your question. the address is <http://hyderabad.usconsulate.gov>

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): The other parent can attend the appointment with the child and bring the notarized DS-3053 (consent form) and application. Please also include a copy of your passport with the consent form.

sohan 2: On chennai consular website, you mentioned only \$ amount to renew passport book and passport card. How do i Pay in cash?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): The Consulate has a fixed exchange rate of Rs. 48 per \$1. However, that rate is changing to Rs. 46 per \$1 in May. You may pay in cash only if you are coming to the consulate for an appointment. If you plan to mail your application, submit a demand draft payable to U.S. Consulate General Chennai.

Madhavan Prasanna: My Son is U.S Citizen by Birth. He is 3 years old. Is it mandatory for him to go to his homeland ( U.S ) in regular interval ?

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): No, there are no mandatory requirements for any U.S. citizen to travel to the U.S. Once a citizen, always a citizen, unless the citizen chooses to give up their citizenship.

Makam: Are u aware of any internet groups that will help US Citizens resident in bangalore network

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): We are not aware of any specific groups. However, we again encourage you to become a fan of U.S. Consulate General Chennai. This might get you in contact with other citizens in the area.

Manisha Sinha: there are yahoo groups of overseas womens club, and also of the bangalore expat club

Manisha Sinha: Hello. Sorry, i have joined in late.

Moderator(Amy): I'll also plug the consulate facebook page. It's the first place to hear about events and to connect with others in the region. [www.facebook.com/chennai.usconsulate](https://www.facebook.com/chennai.usconsulate)

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): Thank you for your time today. I hope this was helpful. You can view a transcript of this session, including the presentation, on our website.

Holly (US Consulate General Chennai): <http://chennai.usconsulate.gov>

C.Srinivasan: thx, pls keep the initiative ongoing, we look forward to it

Matt KB Raj: Great Presentation

useela 2: Thank you